

## A NOTE ON THE COPPER SWORDS FROM KALLUR

By

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In his article on "Archaeological Traces of the Vedic Aryans" Mr. Robert HEINE-GELDERN<sup>1</sup> postulates an Indo-Aryan migration to India between 1200 and 1000 B. C. In the train of evidence—which consists of North Indian finds which, as he says "We are now bound to discern as from a later date than the Indus Civilization and possibly belonging to the Vedic age" are included the copper antennae swords from the Ganges plain, in support of his thesis. The swords have antennae hilts and are—hilt and blade—of one cast having leaf-shaped blades with a distinct middle ridge. They after a comparative scrutiny, betray, according to him, an ultimate connection with European swords, and 'are strongly influenced by North Caucasian forms of the Koban Culture.' He assigns them to the period between 1200 and 1000 B. C.

The purpose of the present note is to draw attention of scholars interested in archaeology, to similar copper-swords, which have been recently discovered at Kallūr in the Hyderabad State.<sup>2</sup> Kallūr is a village in the Mānvī Taluq of the Raichur District. The swords in question are of copper and are three in number. It is stated that they were found concealed under a boulder on one of the hills around that place. The Director of Archaeology in that State was quick to note their similarity to the swords discovered at Fategarh, when they were brought to the notice of the Department. Consequently the site was subjected to further exploration in which it yielded many interesting finds resembling those of Maski, besides offering some primitive rock-drawings, stamping the village as a pre-historic site.

The three swords<sup>3</sup> are of different lengths—39, 30 and 26 inches but except this are quite similar to each other. With all the three, the blade and hilt are of one cast, no mark of separation being visible. The blades are leaf-shaped with a distinct middle ridge, but the smallest of them has a rounded top, while the other two have pointed ones. They have short blunt antennae exactly like

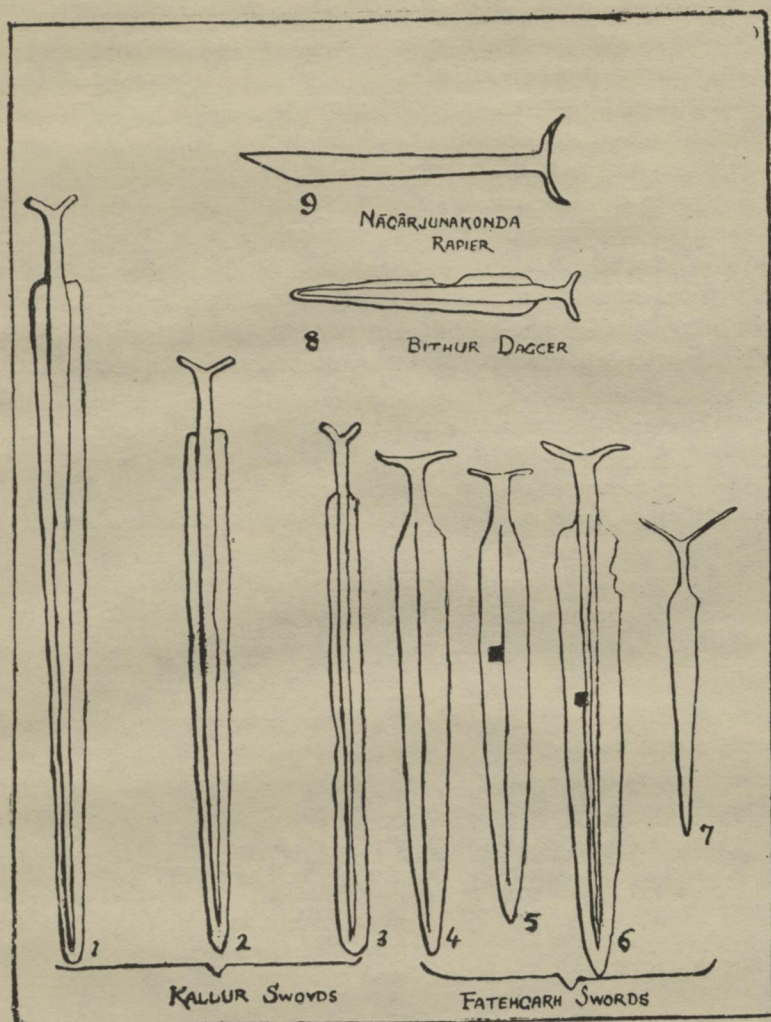
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\* My attention to this subject was drawn by my Teacher Dr. H. D. SANKALIA.

<sup>1</sup> *JISOA*, 4:87-115. Sketches of Antennae Swords found in India are given in the plate, to which please refer.

<sup>2</sup> Annual Report of the Archaeological Department of H. E. H. the Nizam's Dominions for 1937-40 (Calcutta 1942) pp. 23-28, 31-32.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Pl. V (b).



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the antennae dagger from Bithur.<sup>4</sup> It will thus be seen, that these<sup>5</sup> are very nearly similar to those illustrated by HEINE-GELDERN, the only difference between them is that the Kallūr ones have more pronounced shoulders than those of the Ganges plain, which are only rounded projections.

The close similarity of the Kallūr finds<sup>6</sup> —which include stone implements such as axes, cores and flakes, perforated pottery pieces, chank beads and bangles, terracottas, copper objects including a fragmentary axe, etc. — with those of the Maski Industry certainly speaks for the high antiquity of the site, though it cannot be precisely dated. However the period of Kallūr finds seems undoubtedly to be coeval with, if not anterior to, that of the "North Indian finds" which are supposed to belong to the Vedic age — 1200 to 1000 B. C.

The importance of the copper finds at Kallūr as has been brought out by Mr. K. M. AHMAD who investigated<sup>7</sup> the site, is that we may perhaps be forced to revise Sir John MARSHALL's statement that "In Southern India there was no Copper Age"<sup>8</sup>. But the significance of the Kallūr Copper swords in the light of HEINE-GELDERN's theory has missed his attention. How these will affect his thesis will be clear after a close examination of his arguments and these Kallūr finds by competent scholars. But what seems to be most important to me is the occurrence in Southern India of the copper-antennae swords — "a weapon of undoubted European origin" and due to Western influence which accompanied the ethnical or cultural wave, that brought the Indo-Aryans from Western-Asia to India between 1200 and 1000 B. C., at so early a period when there was almost no possibility of "Aryan" influence in that region. Literary evidence points to the 7th century B. C. as the date when Aryanisation of India south of the Vindhya began. Were the swords in question imported from the North? In that case we would be forced to accept Aryan contacts with Southern India at a much earlier date than at present supposed. Be that as it may, the Kallūr swords certainly demand a scholarly attention.

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<sup>4</sup> *JISOA* 4. Pl. XIX, Fig. 34.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, Pl. XIX.

<sup>6</sup> *A. R. A. D.* of H. E. H. the Nizam's Dominions, op. cit., Pls. IX-XIII, and p. 32.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> *CHI* 1-615.

In my "Studies in Nāgārjunakoṇḍā Sculptures"<sup>9</sup> I noted a rapier<sup>10</sup> which seems to have an antennae hilt, but the blade of which is considerably different from the swords referred to above. If it is correct, then it would show that the antennae hilts were in evidence till the 2nd cent. A. D. in Southern India. It would really be instructive if more sculptured instances of antennae hilts are brought to notice. So far as I can see the antennae hilts seem to have fallen in disuse shortly afterwards and perhaps totally disappeared, as I could not find a single instance of it in sculptures later than that date, either from North India or South India.

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<sup>9</sup> *BDCRI* 2.50-111, 263-99.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 285-6 ; Fig. 22;